

Parish of Glenavy and Killead
Letter from Fr Colm and the Parish Pastoral Council
2 June 2019

Dear Fellow Parishioners

As you will be aware, Fr John Burns has withdrawn from ministry because of ill health. We thank him for the huge contribution he has made to the life of the Parish over the last 18 months. We pray that he will soon be restored to health and ask all parishioners to remember Fr John in their prayers.

The departure of Fr John leaves Fr Colm alone as the only full-time priest serving our Parish. While support at weekends will continue to be sought from other members of the Diocesan clergy when available, we are aware that there is a growing number of gaps emerging throughout our Diocese which is likely to worsen as the year progresses. Sadly, this all means that a reduction in the number of Masses celebrated in the Parish is now unavoidable.

After long reflection, deliberation and prayer, the Pastoral Council and Fr Colm have concluded reluctantly that we will have to recommend to Bishop Treanor that the number of Sunday Masses in the Parish should be reduced from seven to four with effect from the weekend of 15/16 June 2019, to ensure the burden on Fr Colm is manageable and to recognise that it is likely that all the weekend Masses will on occasion be celebrated by only one priest. In addition, during the week, there would only be one Mass each day and none on Saturday morning.

Details of the proposed new schedule are as follows:

Weekday Mass Timetable from Monday 17th June 2019

Monday	9.30 am	St Joseph's
Tuesday	7.00 pm	Mater Dei
Wednesday	9.30 am	Mater Dei
Thursday	9.30 am	St Joseph's
Friday	9.30 am	St Joseph's
Saturday	6.00 pm	Mater Dei

Weekend Mass Timetable from Saturday 15th/16th June 2019

	St Joseph's	Mater Dei
Saturday		6.00 pm
Sunday	9.30 am	
Sunday		10.45 am
Sunday	12.00 pm	

These proposed changes are painful for the whole Parish community and especially for those who worship regularly in St James's and Feumore Mass Centre. We have been fortunate in this Parish that we have been able to postpone until now the impact on us of the growing shortage of priests. The changes reflect, however, the reality of that shortage, the impact of which is being felt throughout our Diocese. This trend will continue and deepen in the future. It presents a huge challenge for us all but also an opportunity for lay people to become more involved in the life of the Church and in service of our Parish community.

The Pastoral Council will continue to work on plans to expand further the role of lay people in the life of our Parish in support of Fr Colm.

If you have any comments or feedback on the proposed changes, please speak to any member of the Pastoral Council directly or send them to the Parish office for the attention of the Council.

We ask for your continued support and prayers as we work to try and meet the pastoral needs of all our parishioners.

Fr Colm McBride PP

Joseph McGowan (Chair, on behalf of the Pastoral Council)